

**What is Claimed Is:**

1. A method for processing image data, comprising:  
obtaining image data;  
automatically processing the image data using a set of directives to identify a target  
5 object in the image data and process the image data according to a specified protocol; and  
automatically generating one or more images of the target object based on one or  
more of the directives; and  
storing the one or more generated images in a digital archive.
- 10 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the image data comprises DICOM-formatted  
image data.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein automatically processing the image data using  
a set of directives comprises processing meta-data in DICOM fields to identify the target  
15 object .
4. The method of claim 1, wherein automatically processing the image data  
comprises segmenting the target object using processing parameters specified by one or more  
of the directives.
- 20 5. An imaging system, comprising:  
an image processing module for automatically processing image data using a set of  
directives to identify a target object in the image data and process the image data according to  
a specified protocol; and  
25 a rendering module for automatically generating one or more images of the target  
object based on one or more of the directives; and  
a digital archive for storing the one or more generated images.
6. The system of claim 5, wherein the image data comprises DICOM-formatted  
30 image data.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein the imaging processing module extracts and processes meta-data in DICOM fields of the image data to identify the target object .

5 8. The system of claim 5, wherein the image processing module directs a segmentation module to segment the target object using processing parameters specified by one or more of the directives.